BCCSA clears backlog of CCPO certifications after extraordinary industry response

Following an all-out effort to certify the province's concrete pump operators, the BC Construction Safety Alliance (BCCSA) has cleared the backlog of applicants to the Certified Concrete Pump Operator (CCPO) program.

Provincial regulations, which came into effect on January 1, 2024, required anyone operating a concrete pump to be certified. However, there was little available information on the number of people who would decide to seek certification. The response from the industry was almost overwhelming.

"*Our biggest challenge was the backlog of operators who waited until the very last minute, and sometimes months after the deadline, to register for their assessments,"* says Ammar Kavazovic, Director, Programs and Initiatives with the BCCSA.

There were no limits on the number of applicants who could complete the online theoretical portion of the certification. However, the practical exam required the availability of both assessors and concrete pumps.

BCCSA staff broke down a list of operators requiring assessment by region, priority, and assessment type and assessors maintained communication with company dispatchers. A staff of six assessors worked to process as many as two assessments per day, seven days a week.

"The task was quite complex given the nature of concrete pumping, so aligning a job, the right weather, an operator, and assessor was very difficult in many cases," Kavazovic says. "It was a logistical challenge. One mine site was so remote that it required daily entry through Hyder, Alaska, so our assessor could complete his work."

To date, the CCPO program has administered 843 practical exams. As the large number of applicants was processed, backlogs continued to drop. Current applicants for the practical exam now number about five to 10 per week.

"We still have a steady stream of new individuals entering the industry, and existing operators require additional assessments as they train on new pump types," Kavazovic says. *"However, it's a predictable, stable number that allows us to be quick and nimble in completing practical assessments."*